

Data Quality Campaign - Using Data to Improve Student Achievement

## Building local capacity fuels the development of a culture of data use in New Hampshire

[« Back](#)



Providing value to districts and schools marks the driving goal of all data initiatives designed by the New Hampshire Department of Education. The Department responded to 2004 legislation around student-level data collection by creating the Initiative for School Empowerment and Excellence (i4see). This initiative began the transformation of data collection in New Hampshire from a reporting exercise into a purposeful effort to provide actionable information to stakeholders. It is this commitment to adding value that underlies the successful expansion of New Hampshire's efforts to build educator capacity to use data to improve student achievement.

New Hampshire's work around building educators' capacity to use data has evolved from vendor-driven technical training to a contextual, holistic data analytics model. In 2007-2008 New Hampshire began the rollout of their Performance Plus data tool that now includes functionality for analyzing data, creating assessments and curriculum mapping. Initial capacity building efforts focused on raising awareness, particularly among those who expressed interest in adopting the tool immediately. During the next year, New Hampshire expanded on this initial training that was provided by the vendor by hiring consultants who offered monthly awareness sessions and began to move beyond purely technical training to include role-based user training. In 2009-2010 the Department became more proactive and went directly into schools with more role-based training and training tailored to topics of greatest interest to schools. For example, for schools focused on Response to Intervention (RTI) the training was framed around how this data could be incorporated into and provide value to those ongoing efforts. Currently the Department is employing a train-the-trainer model to build greater capacity at the local level, focus more on strategic planning and empower these leaders to go back to their districts and create a data-driven culture.

New Hampshire has learned several lessons that they would share with others embarking on this work. First, they emphasize the importance of engaging school administrators. While building capacity directly with teachers cannot be overlooked, the participation of the administration proves critical to developing a school-wide data-driven culture. Administrators who model data use and invest time and resources in building the capacity of all staff to utilize data are the linchpin to this taking root in schools. Correspondingly, states should set out with the goal of developing expertise at the local level to continue and enhance training around data use. The state can play a tremendous role as an information provider, developer of training resources and organizer, but ultimately districts and schools should become largely self-sufficient in engaging in continuous improvement and building a culture of data use. The state should provide and enhance the scope of data in the system, while also creating the functionality for districts to customize data analysis on top of easy access reports. New Hampshire has found that demand for training has grown as they have built in more assessments, contextual data and flexibility, all of which are enhancing the value of the system and making the information more timely and actionable.

As New Hampshire's work around building the capacity of educators to use data continues to evolve, one key area is further exploring and developing partnerships with teacher preparation programs. The Department has made a demonstration site of Performance Plus available to universities, which allows for pre-service training on the data tools that teachers will encounter in schools. Discussions are also underway to develop a college course around effective use of data to inform instruction.

For more information:

» [NH, The Initiative for School Empowerment and Excellence](#) » [NH, PerformancePLUS Information System](#)